

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 50-60 are allowed. Claims 14 and 61-63 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 12 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 14. Claims 15 and 28 have been amended in view of the cancellation of claim 14. New claim 64 has been added and includes the allowable subject matter of claim 19 rewritten in independent form including the limitations of intervening claim 13. New claims 65 and 66 track the limitations of claims 20 and 23. No new matter has been added. The pending claims should now be in condition for allowance.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 12, 13, 18, 24, 26, 27, 32, 38, 39, 42, 46, 48, 49 and 61-63 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over Sakai (U.S. 5,486,018). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, in an effort to expedite allowance of the present application, Applicant has amended claim 12 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 14 and have canceled claims 61-63. This rejection is now moot in view of the above amendments. Applicant does not concede the correctness of this rejection.

§ 103 Rejections

Claim 33 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Supalla (U.S. 4,153,237). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. As discussed above, claim 12 should now be in condition for allowance. Therefore, claim 33 is allowable for at least the reason it is dependent upon an allowable base claim. Applicant does not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claim 40 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Lillbacka (U.S. 6,253,867). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. As discussed above, claim 12 should now be in condition for allowance. Therefore, claim 40 is allowable for at least the reason it is dependent upon an allowable base claim. Applicant does not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 43 and 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Estes (U.S. 3,879,044). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. As discussed above, claim 12 should now be in condition for allowance. Therefore, claims 43 and 47 are allowable for at least the reason they are dependent upon an allowable base claim. Applicant does not concede the correctness of this rejection.

New Claims

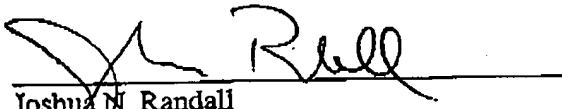
New claim 64-66 have been added and include the allowable limitations of claim 19 rewritten in independent form. Consideration and allowance of new claims 64-66 is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, Applicant requests favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance. If a phone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues related to this matter, please contact Applicant's attorney listed below at 612.371.5387.

Respectfully submitted,

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